

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please replace all previous listings and versions of the claims with the following listing of claims:

***Listing of Claims:***

1. (Currently Amended) An internally threaded fastener assembly comprising:  
a stemmed washer having a washer portion with an abutment surface adapted to abut a surface of a material, a standoff portion integral with the washer portion and configured to extend substantially through the material of a defined thickness ~~and substantially limit compressive loading on the material~~, and a retaining portion integral with the washer portion; and

an internally threaded fastener disposed adjacent to the washer portion and retained rotatably within assembly with the stemmed washer by the retaining portion, wherein the internally threaded fastener is adapted to engage an externally threaded fastener having a shaft insertable through the standoff portion and having a head abutable against an end of the standoff portion opposite the washer portion, such that the standoff portion limits compressive loading by the internally and externally threaded fasteners on the material therebetween.

2. (Original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the fastener includes a peripheral flange and the retaining portion extends radially inwardly to capture the peripheral flange and thereby to retain the fastener in the assembly.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the standoff portion forms a hollow right cylinder.

5. (Original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the washer portion is generally planar.

6. (Original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the fastener is a threaded nut having flats extending from the stemmed washer.

7. (Currently Amended) An internally threaded fastener assembly comprising:  
a threaded nut having a lower peripheral flange; and  
a base having a washer portion having a material abutment surface, a standoff portion having a substantially cylindrical structure extending from the washer portion to an end, and a retaining skirt portion extending integrally from the washer portion and capturing the peripheral flange of the threaded nut to retain the threaded nut rotatably in assembly with the base, wherein the standoff portion is adapted to receive a shaft limit displacement of a threaded fastener securable to the threaded nut relative to the washer portion such that a portion of the threaded fastener abuts the end of the standoff portion to substantially limit compressive loading on a material.

8. (Original) The assembly of claim 7, wherein the nut includes flats extending from the retain skirt portion.

9. (Original) The assembly of claim 7, wherein the standoff portion, the washer portion and the retaining skirt portion form a single-piece structure.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) The assembly of claim 7, wherein the washer portion is generally planar.

12. (Original) The assembly of claim 7, wherein the standoff portion forms a hollow right cylinder.

13. (Currently Amended) An internally threaded fastener assembly comprising:

an internally threaded fastener adapted to engage an externally threaded fastener;  
and

a base having a washer portion with an abutment surface adapted to abut an outer surface of a material, a standoff portion adapted to extend from the washer portion such that the standoff portion extends substantially through the material ~~of a defined thickness to an~~ abutment end of the standoff adapted to limit displacement of the externally threaded fastener relative to the washer portion, and a retaining skirt portion extending integrally from the washer portion and capturing the internally threaded fastener rotatably in assembly with the base.

14. (Original) The assembly of claim 13, wherein the fastener includes a peripheral flange extending radially therefrom, and wherein the skirt portion captures the peripheral flange to retain the fastener in assembly with the base.

15-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A fastener kit comprising:

a stemmed washer having a washer portion with an abutment surface adapted to abut a material, a standoff portion integral with the washer portion and comprising a substantially right cylinder extending from the washer portion to an end opposite the washer portion, and a retaining portion integral with the washer portion;

an internally threaded fastener disposed adjacent to the washer portion and retained rotatably within assembly with the stemmed washer by the retaining portion; and  
an externally threaded fastener which mates with the internally threaded fastener,  
wherein the end of the standoff portion is adapted to limit relative displacement of the externally threaded fastener and the washer portion of the stemmed washer to minimize compression of by the internally and externally threaded fasteners on the material disposed therebetween.

27. (Currently Amended) A fastened joint comprising:

a stemmed washer having a washer portion adapted to abut a compressible substrate, a standoff portion integral with the washer portion, and comprising a substantially right cylinder extending from the washer portion to an end opposite the washer portion, and a retaining portion integral with the washer portion;

an internally threaded fastener disposed adjacent to the washer portion and retained rotatably within assembly with the stemmed washer by the retaining portion;

an externally threaded fastener having a threaded shaft which mates with the internally threaded fastener, the externally threaded fastener including a head which abuts the end of the standoff portion; and

the compressible substrate joined between the standoff portion and the head of the externally threaded fastener, wherein the standoff portion is adapted to limit compression of the substrate between the head of the externally threaded fastener and the washer portion of the stemmed washer.